

SOCIAL ACTION NEWS-LETTER

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Department of Social Welfare Expands Program

By action of the board of trustees on September 13-14, the department of social welfare will henceforth be responsible for administration of the Society's service gift program. This function, which has heretofore been handled by the department of missionary organizations, has been given to the department of social welfare in recognition of the fact that the period of reconstruction will bring many calls for service gifts beyond the program heretofore carried. For a number of years it has been the custom to solicit gifts of clothing, hospital supplies, linens, kindergarten and club materials, etc., for the use of home mission stations and institutions and for hospitals, schools and nurseries in foreign lands. The bulk of this material has been supplied by missionary groups in local churches. Following the Japanese invasion of China and until communication with that nation was cut off by our entry into the war, large shipments of clothing, linens and hospital supplies were made to our missionaries for distribution to the needy. In the homeland, mission institutions like Hazel Green Academy, Southern Christian Institute, Jarvis Christian College, Mexican Christian Institute, Yakima Indian Mission and other institutions have each year been the beneficiaries of these service gifts of local churches.

With the end of the war and reconstruction in sight appeals are coming from wider areas. Already an appeal from UNRRA for 15 million pounds of used clothing has been sent to our churches by the committee on relief appeals of the International Convention. A request has come that the churches of the Disciples of Christ participate in Russian Relief by finding a large quota (100,000 has been suggested) of 'kit boxes' for distribution to Russian war victims returning to their homes in devastated areas. The Southern Baptists have undertaken to fill 200,000 of these kit boxes. Greek War Relief presents a piteous appeal for used clothing for the benefit of the survivors of the Nazi occupation of that unhappy nation. Reports indicate that two million of the six million population have been killed or have died of wounds or starvation. Hunger is rife and tuberculosis threatens the whole nation. The Brethren Service Committee recently undertook to distribute 50,000 yards of cotton goods to the women of their churches for the making of garments for Greek children. The material was supplied by Greek War Relief, the garments were cut in the Brethren Relief Center according to patterns for boys and girls of various ages and shipped to local Brethren churches for completion. The finished garments were returned to the Relief Center, inspected, packaged and shipped to Greece.

The department of social welfare will select the projects to be supported, in cooperation with the departments of financial resources and missionary organizations. It will also create the necessary promotional materials. Solicitation of local missionary groups will be through the department of missionary organizations.

A Message From J. B. Hunter

On September 18, J. B. Hunter, former missionary to Japan and for the past two years director of education and social welfare at the Rohwer (Arkansas) War Relocation Center, reported for duty as national director of world peace and inter-racial understanding in the department of social welfare of The United Christian Missionary Society. Mr. Hunter's office will be in Missions Building, 222 S. Downey, Indianapolis. He will share with James A. Crain in the general program of the department, but will devote his major attention to the work of the Commission on World Order, of which Dr. Roger T. Nooe is chairman. At the request of Social Action News-Letter Mr. Hunter has prepared the following statement:

"Greetings! The editor has asked me to prepare a brief message. My new responsibility is that of directing the work of the Commission on World Order. The task is so important that I was unable to reject it, yet so big that I enter upon it with trembling. However, I feel so sure of cooperation and encouragement of ministers and laymen all across the brotherhood that I begin the undertaking with some degree of confidence. In fact I am eager for more assistance than mere encouragement. I hope that men and women of the brotherhood will write me practical suggestions regarding definite things that we can do together to help prevent war permanently. The tragedy which plagues the world now is so terrible that we Christians must work with unceasing zeal for world brotherhood and peace.

"I have just come from a War Relocation Center that two years ago received 8700 evacuees from the West Coast. Between three and four thousand of them have now found their way back into a somewhat normal American life. Some cannot re-locate until the bread-winner returns from the army. There are now 12,000 young men of Japanese ancestry in the armed forces and military officials report that their record is excellent. More than 900 out of a single battalion have been killed or wounded in action. The attitude of the American people generally has been encouraging, especially when one considers the organized propaganda that has been carried on against these people and the fact that our country is at war with the people from whom these evacuees are descended. Workers have been received into shops and factories all over the land. Young women have travelled from re-location centers all the way to Boston, Spokane, Houston and Chicago, and have met only with courtesy on the way. American soldiers have been the most courteous of all.

"The whole world is at war, but the heart of humanity was never so set upon achieving permanent peace as now. Support for a peace program that is constructive and courageous will come forth from many places—not alone from that freest of all forums, the Protestant pulpit. The minister is no longer the only one in the community whose eyes see to the ends of the earth. Men in the armed forces as well as those in the market-places are becoming painfully aware that war does not

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Congregational Christians Add Labor Minister to Staff

The Congregational Christian Churches on July 1, 1944, called the Rev. David Burgess to the staff of the Board of Home Missions to carry out an experimental ministry of one year to union labor. Mr. Burgess will make his headquarters at Memphis, Tennessee. Contact has been established with the Southern Tenant Farmers Union which also has its headquarters at Memphis and through this union other contacts will be made with labor union groups which may from time to time cooperate with the STFU in the movement of workers to areas of labor shortage. The STFU has already worked out an agreement with the Meat and Cannery Workers Union, Local 56, for the movement of workers from the South to New Jersey. Thus the church will be able to cooperate both with the STFU at the Southern end of the line and with the Meat and Cannery Workers in the North. Similar arrangements have been made with a New Jersey CIO local of cannery workers.

Mr. Burgess's responsibility will be to follow the various streams of migration of STFU members from the South to other areas such as New Jersey, Florida, Michigan, Missouri, Arizona, etc. He will work in the South with STFU laborers in cotton during the spring planting and chopping season and during the fall picking season. He will consult with the staff of the STFU regarding the choice of the migratory movement outside the South to be followed at any given season.

In announcing the project, Dr. Thomas Alfred Tripp, head of the Board of Home Missions, states that the project is primarily a ministry to union labor and the fact that the union chosen for cooperation is an organization of migrant agricultural workers is merely incidental. He further points out that this project is distinct from the migrant work of the Home Missions Council of North America, to which his board heartily subscribes. The project is experimental and is planned at present for only one year, with future developments to depend entirely upon the experience gained.

Other communions will watch with interest this approach of the Congregational Christian Churches to organized labor. If it proves successful it may open up a field of service of the churches in their approach to the greatest unevangelized section of American life — the organized industrial workers of the nation. The United Steel Workers have recently opened the way under the direction of President Philip Murray by the appointment of Mr. John Ramsay to serve as a liaison officer between labor and the churches.

Logansport CPS Hospital Unit Approved

Word was received on September 20 that Selective Service had approved the establishment of the CPS Unit at the state mental hospital at Logansport, Indiana. The unit will be under the supervision of James A. Crain, executive secretary of the department of social welfare and of the Conscientious Objectors Committee of the Disciples of Christ. Harmon Wilkinson, former chairman of young peoples work of Southern California, will serve as assistant director, working under Dr. C. L. Williams, superintendent of the hospital. The unit will consist of fifteen men, of whom six will be Disciples. They will serve as attendants on male wards.

The unit has been welcomed both by Dr. Williams, superintendent, and the hospital staff. The Logansport institution is badly overcrowded due to having to receive several hundred patients from the Evansville hospital which was destroyed by fire some months ago. The staff has been seriously depleted by manpower losses to nearby war plants and the coming of the CPS men will not only make possible better care of the patients but will also materially lighten the load carried by the regular workers. Herman R. Hosier, pastor of the Ninth Street Christian Church, has undertaken to put the boys in touch with the churches of their choice and handle public relations for the unit. The department of social welfare will provide educational and recreational facilities for the group.

The work of conscientious objectors in mental hospitals has served to call attention to one of the most serious defects in our system of public care of the mentally ill. In recent years there has been a marked improvement in the administrative, medical and nursing staffs of mental institutions. In most states trained psychiatrists are selected as chief administrators and staff doctors and nurses are persons trained to handle mental diseases. But little progress has been made in the quality of personnel employed to serve as ward attendants and orderlies. Due to unwillingness of state legislatures to make adequate appropriations for these institutions, these workers, who are in closest and most constant contact with the patients, have been recruited from among persons untrained for their jobs. The work is confining and unpleasant. The hours are long and the pay is poor. Often without idealism, training or any basic understanding of the nature of the patient's illness, attendants are likely to become ill-tempered and arbitrary in dealing with the whims and vagaries of their charges. Unruly patients themselves often give excuse for the use of violence. Under present conditions even the most conscientious hospital administrator cannot be choosy about the selection of attendants. It is frequently a case of take what he can get.

Into this neglected area of social work conscientious objectors have brought light, fresh air and hope. Assigned in units of from fifteen to fifty, these men have taken over as attendants, technicians, orderlies, and the like. Here they find excellent opportunities to test out their theories of respect and personality, the use of non-violent techniques and kindness and love as effective forces. The results have been such as to indicate the possibility of complete reform in this aspect of the institutional care of the mentally ill. As a result of reports made by a unit in a mental hospital at Cleveland, Ohio, the Governor appointed a Mental Survey Commission which is expected to recommend a \$37,000,000 appropriation to provide better care for the mentally ill in that state.

On Social Frontiers

A School of Industrial and Labor Relations has been established at Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y., by act of the state legislature. Cornell is the state university of New York. The purpose of the school, as outlined in the act creating it, is to teach the history of industrial practices of employers and employes, the history and principles of sound industrial relations, the rights and obligations of employers and employes, the development of labor law, and all other phases of employer-employee relations tending to promote public interest. It is related to the State Department of Education and its courses will be open to all who are interested in the field of industrial relations.

* * *

Westbrook Pegler, bitter anti-labor columnist, has been dropped by the Scripps-Howard newspaper chain. Pegler has signed a contract with the Hearst newspapers. Commenting upon the severing of relationships, Roy W. Howard, president of the Scripps-Howard syndicate explained that the decision was by "mutual consent," but went on to say, "Scripps-Howard has never exercised control over the subject matter or opinions of Mr. Pegler as they appear in his column, but we have been unable to satisfy many of our readers on this point, or convince them that Pegler has always expressed Pegler without regard to the opinions or policy of Scripps-Howard." Pegler's bitter attacks upon corrupt union leaders, while perhaps on the whole salutary, were often expressed in terms that seemed to condemn all of organized labor. Other groups, including Catholics and Negroes, have complained bitterly of his stand on other subjects. It was inevitable that his imprecatory type of journalism would arouse bitter opposition. Under Hearst auspices he will have a sympathetic medium through which to express his convictions.

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A recent local option election in Eddy County, New Mexico (Carlsbad the county-seat) brought out the following facts, gleaned from court records by Caswell Neal, a local attorney: crime, insanity and juvenile delinquency increased with the return of the legalized sale of liquor. Arrests for drunkenness for four months of 1944, were: March, 11; May, 13; June, 26; July, 39. The last year of prohibition (1932) there were 46 divorce cases filed. For the year 1943 the cases filed numbered 256. There are now divorce cases pending equal to one every two-thirds of a day.

* * *

Rumors to the contrary, no plans have been made by WRA to close any of the eight relocation centers in which Americans of Japanese ancestry are living until the West Coast ban has been lifted, according to the *Pacific Citizen*, official organ of the Japanese American Citizens League, quoting Dillon S. Myer, national WRA director. The same journal reports Dr. Robert Emerson, of the California Institute of Technology as saying that there can be no successful relocation of Japanese Americans until their right to return to the West Coast is restored. . . . American democracy has been boasted about all over the world," says Dr. Emerson, "and if we can't show by just treatment of Asiatic minorities that we mean what we say, the Far East will look upon us with distrust. It is up to California to right the injustice done." It is reported that one reason why Tokyo has delayed agreement to a third exchange of nationals is its refusal to believe that more than 3000 out of 5000 Japanese nationals in the U. S. have refused to accept repatriation.

Social Issues at the International Convention

When the International Convention of Disciples of Christ opens its sessions at Columbus, Ohio, on October 17, it will face a number of social issues of major importance. Since no convention has been held since the meeting at Grand Rapids in August, 1942, the brotherhood has had no opportunity to express its convictions upon many critical matters now pending. Consequently it is expected that resolutions dealing with current problems in the social field will be prominent in the discussions in the business sessions, in the corridors and in the after-session gatherings.

The question of world peace and post-war world organization will be prominent in the thinking of the delegates. The Commission on World Order will undoubtedly introduce a resolution designed to put the convention squarely behind the Federal Council's Commission on a Just and Durable Peace and its Six Pillars of Peace. The Commission has carried on an active campaign to bring the results of the Drake Conference to the attention of the churches and plans are under way for the formation of study groups in the churches during the coming months. In cooperation with the Commission on a Just and Durable Peace, leaders in one hundred centers are being asked to set up seminar groups to evaluate the Six Pillars of Peace in the light of the changing international situation and to list concrete steps that can be taken to awaken local communities to the need of world organization.

Equally important is the question of peace-time conscription. With reports from Washington indicating that the conscription issue will be taken up by Congress immediately after the election recess with the possibility of immediate action, it is expected that the convention will be asked to pass a resolution urging delay until after the war is over. For such a procedure there are strong arguments. The issue has not been before the people. Neither major party has spoken on the subject in their platforms and action now would be without a mandate from the country. Adoption of peace-time conscription while a war is on settles an important issue while the people are in no mood to give objective attention to it. No peacetime conscription law should be enacted while ten million men are in the armed forces, many of them in distant lands where they have no opportunity to express themselves about it. Finally, is peacetime conscription consistent with our aims of world organization and friendly international relationships?

The attitude of the churches toward the conscientious objector will undoubtedly be a subject of discussion. Reports that the Disciples Peace Fellowship will discuss the issue at one of the after-sessions which they share with the Campbell Institute will give ample opportunity for questions. The presence of several Disciples from CPS units not far from Columbus will open up the question of support for C. Os. While The United Christian Missionary Society has a committee on conscientious objectors which has raised between \$25,000 and \$30,000 for support of the 60-odd Disciples in CPS, the committee has not been allowed to share in funds raised to meet war-time emergencies.

A group of approximately 50 pastors and leaders has been invited to meet with a group of labor leaders to discuss relations between the churches and labor. Plans looking to the setting up of an all-Negro staff to handle matters relating to Negro churches will undoubtedly come up for examination and discussion.

Federal Council Supports Permanent FEPC

The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America has gone squarely on record in support of legislation to establish the Fair Employment Practices Committee on a permanent basis. On August 30, Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam, speaking for the Federal Council, told the Senate sub-committee on education and labor that religion, education and the law must unite to remove causes of racial tension which exist in our great centers of population. Declaring that "the right to work is elementary," Bishop Oxnam asserted that "within this right a man's opportunity should be determined by his character and his capacity, never by his color and his creed." "The proposed legislation," he said, "seeks to guarantee this right and is necessary for the reason that an abstract right must be made enforceable if it is to be meaningful." Pointing out that American soldiers now fighting in foreign lands do not ask whether their comrades are white, black, Catholics or Jews, he warned that these soldiers "who have fought to restore liberty must not return to find freedom denied at home." "Racial discriminations here," the Bishop said, "are played up by our enemies and become divisive forces, thus making difficult the ways of unity that world order demands. Most of the Protestant forces of the United States are on record as favoring legislation to seek these ends," he continued, "and several of the major denominations, as well as the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, have specifically recorded their approval of this particular Act."

Churches Prepare for "V-Day"

In view of the possibility that hostilities in Europe may come to a sudden end (though we are warned that the war may not end that way, either in Europe or Asia) widespread preparations are being made throughout the country for the proper observance of the day as a period of thanksgiving and intercession. In many communities patriotic and civic organizations are joining with the churches to see that the event is not marked by the sort of riotous orgy that characterized Armistice Day in 1918 in many places, but rather by a sober realization of the terrible cost of military victory and the heart-breaking problems that will remain to be solved when the fighting is over. The end of the struggle will mean the lifting of an immense burden of anxiety and dread from the hearts of millions of people throughout the world. The frivolous and unthinking will tend to throw off the normal restraints and celebrate the occasion as some celebrate Christmas—by drunkenness and rioting. The churches of every community can render a significant service by taking a leading part in formulating community plans which will emphasize the elements of penitence and humility in the observance. With the end in view the department of social welfare has recently sent to every pastor in the brotherhood a copy of "A Service of Worship for use by the Churches at the End of the War," prepared by the Federal Council of Churches and obtainable in quantities from its offices at 297 Fourth Avenue, New York, N. Y. The price is \$1.50 per hundred; \$5 for five hundred, or \$10 per thousand. A pamphlet entitled, "Helpful Suggestions" for observing the occasion can also be had at 5c per copy. It is expected that this worship service will be widely used by the Protestant churches throughout the nation in event the ending of hostilities in Europe comes as the result of an armistice. The service has been especially prepared for interdenominational and community use. Orders should be sent directly to the Federal Council.

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solve the problems of mankind. Within the church's membership are boys who are aboard cruisers on every sea and in fox-holes on distant islands, or flying planes over practically the whole earth. Their families are now able to follow the minister with new understanding when he expresses concern over the malaria-infested tropics or starvation in China. Sons and husbands have written home about these things which they have seen at first-hand. Missionaries have known about these conditions for decades, but now they seem close by.

"November 12 has been set aside as World Order Sunday by the Commission on a Just and Durable Peace of the Federal Council of Churches and will be widely observed by the Protestant churches throughout the nation. Materials have been sent to every pastor in the brotherhood and express the hope that they will be used by every church in the brotherhood. The world is now one. The church must demonstrate that the human family is now one family. The God Father does not will that it be divided into warring national households. The world is now joined in a grim struggle that involves suffering and death. Perhaps that suffering is a common experience that can draw us together in a common understanding. To the church is assigned the task of binding the world together in such a way that suffering love can replace suffering hate."

Kansas City Church Sober V-Day

University Heights Christian Church, Kansas City, Mo., Blaine Hunten, pastor, has taken decisive action relative to the observance of V-Day. The board of officers of the church recently adopted the following resolution which has been widely circulated:

"Since in the course of this second World War there has been so much dependence on God by the most renowned military and political leaders, as well as by millions of parents and millions of service men and women, it would seem that the end of the conflict should be marked by days of great thanksgiving to Almighty God, by an era of sober and sincere prayer for Divine guidance in the terrifying problems of the peace.

"Wherefore be it resolved: That this board urge all present Christian associations to begin now to enlist support for a nationwide closing of all drinking places of whatever name during the first days of the peace, that the Christian citizenship of America may lead the nation in prayer and thanksgiving (rather than permitting the baser elements to plunge the country into a drunken spree.)

On the basis of the resolution the pastor addressed a letter to Governor Forrest C. Donnell urging executive action to "proclaim a statewide holiday (holiday) with all bars, beer halls, and liquor stores closed for at least 48 hours and with other business houses closed for one full day in order that all citizens may join in community meetings held in recognition of the triumph of our cause and in sacred honor of those who have so dearly bought our victory . . ."

In his letter to the Governor, Mr. Hyten said,

"Will you not, sir, lead our great people in a more sober and dignified statewide celebration, centering in community meetings which emphasize the triumph of human decency and freedom, and give great and significant place to those who poured out their young lives to purchase the victory we meet to celebrate? . . ."

The example set by this Kansas City church should be acclaimed throughout the land and thousands of other congregations should follow their splendid example.